



COMMITTEE ON
**EDUCATION
& LABOR**
REPUBLICANS

**COMMITTEE
STATEMENT**

**Opening Statement of Rep. Fred Keller (R-PA), Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Hearing:
"From Excluded to Essential: Tracing the Racist Exclusion of Farmworkers,
Domestic Workers, and Tipped Workers from the Fair Labor Standards Act"
May 3, 2021**

(As prepared for delivery)

"As the foundation of our nation's wage and hour protections, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) affects nearly every workplace across the country.

However, our world looks very different now than it did 83 years ago when the FLSA became law.

The nature of work in the United States and by extension, the American workforce, has also changed.

These changes matter and have very real implications for today's workforce.

This fundamental transformation in the workplace has brought about technological advances that are enabling a diverse population to balance professional and personal needs in ways that were unheard of in the 1930s.

While these developments are encouraging, unfortunately there is a rapidly growing disconnect between federal standards and the needs of a vast majority of working Americans in the 21st century.

Committee Republicans have long championed necessary updates to labor and employment policies that help American workers and business owners compete in the global economy.

We stand ready to work in a bipartisan manner to modernize the FLSA to meet the ever-evolving needs of a workforce that increasingly desires flexibility, choice, and mobility.

Unfortunately, the misguided proposals before us today fail to address the needs of the modern workforce and will ultimately harm the very individuals my colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim to help.

A radical, mandated wage policy and one-size-fits-all regulations will lead to fewer employment opportunities, less economic freedom, restricted hours for workers, and more aggressive use of automation, all while threatening our economic recovery from COVID-19.

Congress can either consider policies which incentivize job creators to continue employing American workers and create new pathways for innovation and entrepreneurship, or we can double-down on out-of-date policies resulting in unemployment.

As states continue to relax COVID-19 restrictions and businesses continue to reopen safely, now is the time to consider pro-growth policies that reflect the needs of our modern economy and workforce and create more economic freedom and independence.

Unfortunately, today's hearing will not help further productive discussion about how we can foster an environment to create better, higher-paying jobs without costly, one-size-fits-all government mandates that ignore industry-specific needs and the resources available to small business owners."

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